

# NEWSRELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Corrections Department seeks more information on START proposals**

The Montana Department of Corrections has asked the two parties responding to requests for proposals to operate a key correctional program to provide more information about their proposals submitted Aug. 26.

The department follows a process established in statute and administrative rules to request clarification of some items included in the original proposals submitted by Two Rivers Authority in Hardin and Community, Counseling and Correctional Services Inc. (CCCS) of Butte.

In letters sent to each of the parties Friday, Gary Willems, chief of the department's Contracts Management Bureau, said fairness dictates that the agency have a clear understanding of what the two parties have proposed and are capable of providing.

The proposals came in response to a request for proposals issued earlier this year to transform an innovative pilot project into a permanent part of the state's correctional system. The request sought offers to maintain operation of the START (Sanction, Treatment, Assessment, Revocation and Transition) program, which began at its Warm Springs location as a three-year experiment in December 2005. The goal of the program is to use short-term incarceration, coupled with assessment and treatment of offenders' needs, to help them get back on track and return successfully to their communities.

START has been operated by Community, Counseling and Correctional Services Inc. since its inception. The contract expires in December. START, managed under the Adult Community Corrections Division, is primarily a means of diverting from prison those offenders who violate conditions of their community placements.

In a letter to Two Rivers, the department required the organization to clarify or provide additional information in regard to its financial stability, rate estimate, and ability to accept inmates within two months of being awarded the contract. The department also asked for information concerning TRA's mission, goals and siting. The letter to CCCS required clarification on the daily rate the company would charge the state to house offenders.

Responses are due Oct. 20.

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